


DIMITROV'S RELATION TO THE POPULAR
FRONT POLICY


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PROBLEM

To trace a speech made by Georgi Dimitrov in France during the Spanish Civil War regarding the shift in the party line towards the Italian Fascist masses.

CONCLUSION

No public appearance of Dimitrov between his release from Germany in February, 1934 and the conclusion of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in August 1939, could be traced. A discussion of Dimitrov's relation to the Popular Front policy is submitted instead.

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It can be assumed that a public appearance of Dimitrov in France during the political crises of 1934-1939 would have been a major event and given publicity in the Comintern press. Since Dimitrov was in reality already leading the Third International several months prior to his official appointment as Secretary-General in August 1935, it seems unlikely that he would have appeared in person in France, since to do so would have exposed M. Thorez and the French Communist Party to the reproach of being controlled by Moscow.

Dimitrov, nevertheless, played a decisive role in the swing to the Popular Front policy, and he is represented as its official author. By 1934, the extreme radicalism of the Comintern had brought about failure after failure, particularly in Germany and Bulgaria. An about face was due. This was accomplished under orders from Moscow. The French Communist Party inaugurated a change in February 1934 and in July of the same year concluded an alliance with the Socialists. Socialist-Communist co-operation already existed during the revolt in the Asturias in the autumn of 1934. A new policy was also imperative with regard to the new alignment of the Soviet Union with the western countries, which manifested itself in the discontinuance of the war scare pretense, the Soviet entry into the League of Nations, and the alliances with France and Czechoslovakia. But cooperation with right-wing socialists and reformists was precisely what the Communist press had repeatedly denounced as Trotskyism.

The outstanding propaganda asset of the Comintern in that period was Georgi Dimitrov. He had won world-wide sympathy by his defense at the Reichstag Fire trial. He had been given Soviet citizenship and had gone to the USSR in February 1934. He was considered the appropriate person to inaugurate the new policy before the Seventh Congress of the Communist International scheduled for August 1935. Dimitrov also was on record as having been opposed to the left-wing tactics of his own Bulgarian Section including the bombing of the Sofia Cathedral, and was regarded as half traitor by the Bulgarian Party.

The change of front was foreshadowed in several articles published prior to the Seventh Congress. Dimitrov himself proclaimed as much in a speech to foreign workers' delegations in Moscow in May 1935.

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On August 2, 1935, Dimitrov delivered an eight-hour report to the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in Moscow. He gave a Marxian analysis of Fascism and tried to explain the appeal of Fascism to certain social strata. He suggested cooperation with right-wing socialists, reformists, and religious and democratic groups, and advocated concessions to nationalistic feelings.

He openly admitted that support of the Soviet Union was the paramount aim of the proletarians all over the world. A chapter of this report carried the heading "The United Front and the Fascist Mass Organizations."

After some ostensible discussion - there was no longer any real opposition within the Party at that time - the report was unanimously adopted.

Together with two other speeches made by Dimitrov during the Seventh Congress, this report became the basic document for the Popular Front Policy of the ensuing years. Dimitrov was elected Secretary-General of the Third International and continued in this capacity until its abolition in 1943.

Between 1935 and August 1939 Dimitrov published a series of articles in which he restated and elaborated the ideas of his report in the light of the ensuing events. Yet, he was quick in defending the new about-face of Communist policy after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its betrayal of the Spanish allies in an article of October 1939, entitled, "Communism and the War."

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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SPEECHES AND ARTICLES BY DIMITROV RELATING
TO THE POPULAR FRONT

The speeches of Dimitrov at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International together with some previous and subsequent speeches and articles, were given widest publicity. A collection was translated into many languages and repeatedly reprinted up to the present time. The Report to the Seventh Congress was published in Russian, English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Estonian, Polish, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Lithuanian, Rumanian, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean. Collections of Dimitrov's speeches and articles were published as follows:

English: The United Front, the Struggle against Fascism and War. New York, International Publishers, 1938
(Includes speeches from 1935 to 1937.)

Selected Speeches and Articles, London, 1951 (In CIA Library)

Russian: V borbu za yedinyi front protiv fashizm i voynu. Stat'i i rechi 1935-1939. Moscow, State Publ. 1939.

Bulgarian: Vorbata za yedinen front protiv fashizma i voynata Sofia, Izd. Koma Part. 1949.

French: La lutte pour le front unique contre le fascisme et la guerre. Paris, Editions sociales internationales, 1938.

Italian: Dal fronte antifascista alla democrazia popolare Torino 1950.

The following speeches and articles concerning the Popular Front Policy are contained in the above collections (titles quoted from the New York edition, dates taken from the original Russian edition):

May 1935 Speech before the Foreign Workers Delegations in the Hall of Columns in Moscow.

August 2, 1935 The Offensive of Fascism and the Tasks of the Communist International in the Struggle for the Unity of the Working Class against Fascism. Report to the Seventh Congress of the Communist International.

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August 13, 1935	<u>Speech at the Discussion of the Seventh Congress</u>
August 20, 1935	<u>Conclusive Statement before the Seventh Congress</u>
September 25, 1935	<u>Speech before the Sixth Congress of the Communist Youth International</u>
November 16, 1935	<u>Answer to the Spanish Socialists. A Letter to Justo Amutio, Editor of the Journal "Adelante Verdad"</u>
February 13, 1936	<u>One Must Not Be Silent - It Is Time To Act</u> (Comments on the events in France)
March, 1936	<u>The United Front in the Struggle against Fascist Warmongers</u> (An article on the occasion of the Seventh Day of International Solidarity)
May 1, 1936	<u>The United Front in the Struggle for Peace</u> (First published in Pravda, May 1, 1936)
November 7, 1936	<u>The United Front in the Struggle against Fascism and War</u>
December 31, 1936	<u>On the Threshold of 1937</u>
March 1937	<u>Ten Years of the Journal 'Lo Stato Operaio'</u> (Lo Stato Operaio was the theoretical organ of the Italian Communists, published in Paris)
June 4, 1937	<u>The Lessons of A lmeria</u>
July 18, 1937	<u>Spain's Year of War</u>
August 1, 1937	<u>Fascism Means War</u>
November 7, 1937	<u>The Soviet Union and the Working Class of the Capitalistic Countries</u>
November 7, 1937	<u>Proclamation of the Executive Committee of the Comintern</u>
May 1, 1938	<u>The Pledge of Victory</u>
July 18, 1938	<u>To the Second Anniversary of the Heroic Struggle of the Spanish People</u>
September 1938	<u>Unity of the International Proletariat against Fascism. After Munich</u>

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(Georgi Dimitrov, a commemorative book of reference)
Sofia, Bulgarski Bibliografski Institut, 1949
(A bibliography of Dimitrov's major speeches and articles)

2. Biographies

- a. Current Biography. New York, Wilson, 1950. Article:
"George Dimitrov"
- b. Stella Dimitrova Blagoyeva Georgi Dimitrov, biografski ochark. Moscow, 1951.
- c. Obituaries published in France (Cahiers de Communisme
and Europe, both of July 1949.
- d. Biographic files of CIA and the Department of State.

3. Historical Works

- a. Frans Borkenatz World Communism, New York, Dutton, 1939
- b. James Patrick Hanrahan The History of the Third International Washington, 1938. (A Georgetown University thesis)
- c. Reginald James Dingle Russia's Work in France, London,
Hale, 1938.

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 - (2) Inprekorr (International Press Correspondence).
 - (3) Rundschau ueber Politik, Wirtschaft und Soziale Bewegung, Basel.
- b. Indexes to The New York Times and The Times of London